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DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: TIP IN TURKEY: MEDIA ATTENTION, JULY 1-15, 2004

1. (U) In response to G/TIP inquiries about anti-TIP public information campaigns, post provides as examples the following TIP press reports published in daily newspapers and circulated nationwide. Text of the articles (originally published in Turkish) is provided through unofficial local FSN translation.

2. (U) Published July 14, 2004 by Tajik News source Khujand Leninabadsкая Pravda in Russian:

TITLE: Tajikistan: Poverty Pushing People To Slave Labor, Paper Reports

BEGIN FBIS TRANSLATED TEXT: Khujand Varorud in Russian on 14 July in an article entitled "Slaves of the new civilization" reported that Tajik nationals are forcibly exploited as labor or sex slaves in some foreign countries and poverty drives people to this.

"Our country's citizens are often forcibly exploited as slaves or a free labor force (sometimes for paltry wages) in the steppes of Kazakhstan and on the expanses of Russia. And young women are becoming the objects of sexual exploitation in the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, Turkey and China. It is quite possible that forcible exploitation also exists in the country, but open trade is not yet an issue. The cause of all this is material dependence which pushes people to agree to slave labor in the search for a piece of bread," the article said.

The first deputy prosecutor of northern Soghd Region, Izzatullo Muhammadiyev, said in his interview to the newspaper that organized criminal groups were arranging trafficking in women.

"Law-enforcement agencies of the country have established that some criminal groups under the guise of tourism and shopping tours together with residents of other Central Asian states take our women abroad, where, taking away their documents or making them financially dependent, force them to be engaged in prostitution. During the investigation of a number of criminal cases we found out that they take girls out of the country mainly under false passports, changing their names, nationality and age, as well as concluding fictitious marriages. In 2003, according to data presented by tourist organizations, 138 women and girls left the country on tourist visas, 91 of them to Dubai city, 45 to China and two to Iran. Seven women took abroad with themselves their teenage daughters aged from 14 to 17 years," Muhammadiyev said.

The deputy prosecutor also added that the region's law-enforcement bodies were operating actively in this field.

"Last year, 415 loose women were detained as a result of checks carried out by staff of the Soghd Region police directorate. The region's law-enforcement agencies are conducting very active and successful work in this area. Sixty people, including 12 people for human trafficking who were members of organized criminal groups, have been sentenced for crimes in this area," he said. END TEXT.

3. (U) Published July 8, 2004 by Turkey's Anatolian News Agency:

TITLE: President Sezer Meets Romanian President Iliescu; SEZER: 'WE REACHED CONSENSUS TO DEVELOP COOPERATION'

BEGIN TEXT: BUCHAREST - Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer, on an official visit to Romania, said on Thursday that he and Romanian President Ion Iliescu reached consensus to promote existing cooperation in bilateral, regional and international issues.

Following their tete-a-tete Sezer and Iliescu chaired meetings between their respective delegations. Later,

they held a joint press conference in which Sezer noted that bilateral relations and cooperation were significantly developed between the two countries during the last 15 years.

There was not any political problem between Turkey and Romania, Sezer stressed. Noting that economic and commercial relations were at a very good level, Sezer said that Turkey was the biggest trade partner of Romania in the region. He stated that trade volume was increased to nearly 2 billion U.S. dollars last year.

According to official data, Turkish businessmen's investments in Romania amounted to 418 million U.S. dollars, he noted.

Underlining that Turkey was very pleased over Romania's participation in NATO Summit held in Istanbul on June 28th and 29th, 2004, Sezer said, "I believe that we, as two allied countries, would maintain the solidarity and close contacts, contributing this way to the safeguard of global and regional peace and stability."

President Sezer stressed that his visit also helped to boost bilateral relations that had roots deep in history. Recalling that Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan had given Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Nastase a replica of King Stefan of Romania's sword, which is currently exhibited at the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, during his visit to Romania last May, Sezer said that the sword would now be exhibited temporarily at the National Arts Museum in Romania.

Meanwhile, sources said that during his meeting with Romanian President Iliescu, President Sezer expressed his pleasure seeing Romania as a NATO ally.

Sezer also briefed Iliescu on the latest developments on the Cyprus issue and asked for the support of Romania which is a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, for the lifting of restrictions and embargoes imposed on the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), sources said.

They added that the two leaders also discussed terrorist organization PKK/Kongra-Gel issue. President Sezer said that PKK carried out activities in Romania from time to time and asked that Romania took necessary measures against such activities.

Sources added that the two leaders decided to initiate efforts to open a Turkish Culture Center in Bucharest, recalling that a Romanian Culture Center was already opened in Istanbul.

ILIESCU: 2004 WILL BE TURKEY YEAR FOR ROMANIAN ECONOMY

Describing bilateral relations as ''brilliant'', Iliescu said Sezer's visit to Romania was a follow-up of ''high level dialogue'' between the two countries.

Iliescu said new fields of cooperation were probed in their bilateral meetings with Sezer.

He expressed his appreciation for the successful organization of NATO Istanbul Summit, stating that important decisions were taken about NATO's future.

Iliescu said NATO member Romania wanted to join forces with Turkey and other member countries to contribute to the strengthening of the Alliance in north of the Balkans and the Black Sea.

He added Romania's full membership to NATO enhanced the cooperation between the two countries, stressing that it also contributed to the security and stability in the region.

Iliescu said they also had the opportunity with Sezer to discuss the situation in Europe.

Romanian President said they ''hailed'' the legal reforms in Turkey, stating that this would contribute to Turkey's bid to meet Copenhagen criteria.

Iraq, Cyprus question, and other regional issues were also discussed at the meeting, Iliescu said.

Pointing to the importance of economic relations between the two countries, Iliescu said they call 2004 as ''Turkey year'' for Romanian economy and stressed that the volume of bilateral trade between the two countries would reach 2.5 billion U.S. dollars in 2004. Iliescu said he and Sezer discussed cultural relations like establishment of a Romanian university in Turkey.

"International terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, drug and human trafficking were also discussed at the meeting," Iliescu noted.

Iliescu said relations between Turkey and Romania constituted an example for "good neighborhood". END TEXT.

14. (U) Tbilisi Rustavi-2 Television in Georgian on July 6, 2004. [FBIS Translated Text]

TITLE: Georgia: Turkish 'Captives,' Human Trafficking Victims, Escape From Abkhazia
BEGIN TRANSLATION: [Presenter Nino Shubladze] Victims of human trafficking in Abkhazia: Three Turkish captives crossed the Inguri bridge [between breakaway Abkhazia and the rest of Georgia] to this side today. These people have escaped after two months of captivity by an Abkhaz separatist group. They were kept in the village of Kochora and forced to work in difficult conditions. The Turkish captives were given food only once a day and subjected to physical abuse. They lived as slaves.

Now the victims are at the Gali District security department [subordinated to Georgia-backed government of Abkhazia in exile]. They are demanding release of other captives who remain on the territory of Abkhazia. According to them, 22 other people who need help are still in Abkhazia. [Video shows two men getting in a car, a group of people around a table]

[Man, captioned as Ali Konja, Turkish citizen, in Turkish with Georgian translation superimposed] Many others also wanted to leave, but they turned back because they were scared. I feel terrible and I pity those left there. We were lucky that we had hidden a mobile phone and managed to contact the [Turkish] consulate.

[Another man, captioned as Sertan Dilek, Turkish citizen, Georgian translation superimposed] We were in very difficult conditions. They assigned watchmen to us, and we were unable to contact anyone. They also took our documents away. Every day, they would take us to work in [the village of] Akarma and [the town of] Tqvarcheli. We were treated like slaves.

[Gia Jikia, the chief of the Gali District security department, interviewed] The security ministry of Abkhazia [in exile] has more than once obtained information that foreign citizens were taken to Abkhazia under false promises. In fact, they are forcing them to work and treating them as slaves.

[Description of Source: Tbilisi Rustavi-2 Television in Georgian -- Leading commercial TV station known for its aggressive reporting and critical attitude toward the country's central and regional authorities. The company's web site (www.rustavi2.com) claims that broadcasts reach "around 84 percent of the country's population".] END TRANSLATION.

15. (U) Published Friday, July 2, 2004 by Transitions Online (TOL), a Czech nonprofit organization established with financial and professional support from the Open Society Institute's (OSI) Internet program and the Media Development Loan Fund (MDLF):

TITLE: Moldova's Battle Against Human Trafficking
by Lauren Gard

BEGIN TEXT: Moldova's efforts to crack down on traffickers are underfunded, the crime is underreported, and the victims are misunderstood.

Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles by students in the University of California at Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism, written in collaboration with TOL correspondents. Irina slides six snapshots across the table in a sunlit lawyer's office in northern Moldova. "I used these photos to put him behind bars," she says.

One image shows the slim 21-year-old in a tank top and shorts lounging on a flowery futon. "This was the apartment in Turkey," she says. In another, she's on a boat in the Mediterranean Sea, her hands full of small, iridescent fish. "I was with a client in this one."

Irina, a redhead with a pixie haircut and catlike, sparkling green eyes, stares silently at a photo of her Turkish captor. He stands casually by a dock in black pants and a white button-down shirt, smoking a cigarette. His dark eyes seem to gaze back at her.

"He gave me these photos so I would have a memory of him," Irina says, with a thin smile. "He was stupid. I knew what town he was in. I knew the street, the apartment."

"He" is Medmed Cara, the man who forced Irina to stay with him in Turkey for several months while he beat her and earned thousands of dollars by selling her to clients for sex.

When Irina made her way back to Moldova five months ago, she got in touch with the Center for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women, a legal aid group set up in 2001 by the Moldovan Association of Women Lawyers to assist trafficking victims. The lawyers at the center's office in Balti, Moldova's second-largest city, have become Irina's closest allies. They helped her bring the case against the man in the snapshots. In March, he was found guilty of trafficking.

"Tomorrow his sentence will be handed down," Irina says, gathering up the photos. "He'll get 10 to 20 years."

'A PERSONAL PROBLEM FOR THE GIRLS'

Irina's case is one of more than 50 that the anti-trafficking center has handled here in Moldova, a tiny country of 4 million people with a largely agricultural economy--often described as the poorest country in Europe--sandwiched between Romania and Ukraine. The number of cases represents a fraction of the total number of Moldovan women who have been taken abroad, some willingly, most not, to work as prostitutes or sex slaves in the last decade.

According to many estimates, since the mid-1990s more than 200,000 Moldovan girls and women have been trafficked to the Balkans, Western Europe, Russia, Turkey, and Dubai. Shortly after his appointment last year as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's ambassador to Moldova, William Hill told the BBC that Moldova had become "the largest supplier state in all of Europe" for trafficking victims.

Punishing traffickers is a difficult--and new--challenge for law enforcement authorities in Moldova. Before 2001, the country had no laws against sex trafficking, and before 2003, none mandating minimum prison sentences for traffickers. Convicted traffickers simply paid a fine and walked away.

Even now, court cases against traffickers are the exception, not the rule. Police units are underfunded and overwhelmed by the immensity of the problem. Unlike crimes like murder and theft, victims of this type of crime are rarely willing to talk. Some traffickers pay their victims to keep quiet, but most don't need to be bribed; they simply won't go to the police, much less appear in court. There is a huge fear of ruining their own reputation or that of their family.

"It makes it difficult to build a case because they keep it all inside," says Irina's lawyer, Nelly Babcinschi. "They're very damaged. And it's hard for a girl to make a statement in court because her lawyer, her trafficker's lawyer, the judge, and her parents may all be there."

Cracking down on traffickers is becoming more important to the Moldovan government, but it is still not a priority. A national anti-trafficking plan was adopted in November 2001, but it was two years before a committee of government ministers, state prosecutors, and representatives of local and international nongovernmental organizations was formed. The issue briefly gained a foothold in the public's mind when three international sex-trafficking conferences took place during the same week in March in Chisinau. No less than the OSCE has stepped in to help the government implement an anti-trafficking program, but if not for the efforts of small nonprofits, funded primarily by foreign governments like the United States and Sweden, observers say little would be achieved.

Svetlana Rijicova, one of only two psychiatrists in Moldova who counsels trafficked girls, says the future looks bleak. "For the moment the government has no money to support anti-trafficking organizations," she says. "It's not a priority. It's perceived as just a personal problem for the girls."

Nonprofits have focused primarily on educating girls in the most at-risk age group, those aged 18 to 24, and on forming alliances with agencies abroad to help bring trafficked women back. An estimated 80 percent of women

who are trafficked knew the risks before it happened to them.

"Of course I knew about it," Irina says, "but I never thought it would happen to me."

Until now, Irina hasn't shared her story with anyone outside her lawyer's office or the courtroom. "I love and trust my friends, but I won't tell them because I don't think they can help. It's better to keep my feelings inside than to walk down the street and have people point and say, 'There's that girl who was a prostitute in Turkey,' " she says, staring at a cup of black tea growing cold on the table before her. As for her widowed mother, who lives in a village 30 kilometers away, "It would kill her if she knew."

SOLD INTO SLAVERY

Before she fell into Medmed Cara's hands, Irina was working as a seamstress for a Turkish pajama company in Balti, earning \$40 a month. That's less than the average national wage of \$56, but not bad for someone in Moldova who has only finished 10th grade. But it didn't go far. When her landlady told her about a bartending job in Turkey, she agreed to go. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that half of Moldovan women who are trafficked knew the person who "recruited" them.

"I wanted to be rich," Irina says. "I wanted to buy my mom an apartment in Balti."

Irina lied to her mother and told her she was going to Moscow to work, as many people in her village had done. Instead, she took a minivan to Ukraine, and from there took a ship to Istanbul. She was met at the dock by Cara, the man in the photo, who took her by boat to the popular resort town of Fethiye.

"I refused to work as a prostitute," she says. "So he beat me and then raped me while a client waited outside in his car. He made me shower, and then I went with the client." Cara beat her and forced her to have sex with him every night after that. After two weeks, she tried to run away but failed. The brutal beating that followed knocked one of her teeth out.

Irina decided that the only way to survive was to convince Cara that she loved him. The strategy worked, the fist-and-belt beatings lessened. Several months after her arrival in Turkey she called a neighbor in Moldova in order to speak with her mother, who has no phone. "She asked why my Romanian was so bad," Irina remembers. "I spoke only Turkish there, had no one to speak Romanian with." The client who let her use his phone said he was very sorry that she'd gotten into such a bad situation. Then he had sex with her.

When her visa expired in November, Cara sent Irina back to Moldova with \$150 in her pocket and a promise that he would soon follow.

Back home, she waited and began forming a plan to involve the police. Law enforcement authorities are notoriously untrustworthy in countries where corruption is rampant, like Moldova. Sometimes when a girl reports that she has been trafficked, their response is to sell her back to her traffickers and pocket the money. In Irina's case, though, the police listened, especially once she told them that she had photos.

When, true to his word, Cara came after Irina, he moved into her mother's house and insisted on sharing her bed. "My mom thought he was a boyfriend from Moscow," she says. "She didn't like him. He complained all the time that our food wasn't spicy enough. He told her we were getting married. And what could I say?"

WARNINGS GO UNHEEDED

In a riverside village 150 kilometers east of Glinjeni, 60 teenagers slouch in wooden chairs in a school auditorium. Their attention is focused on a television on the stage, which is showing a movie of a teenage girl from an unnamed former Soviet bloc country who jumps at an offer to travel to Sweden with her handsome new boyfriend. Once there, she is locked in an apartment, beaten, and repeatedly sold to male clients to be raped. The 2001 movie, *Lilya 4-Ever*, by Swedish director Lukas Moodysson, is being shown as part of a public education campaign by UNICEF, the IOM and the anti-trafficking group La Strada, with the help of a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. State Department. The film ends with a desperate Lilya leaping to her death off a freeway overpass.

As the credits roll a few nervous laughs can be heard in the cold auditorium. Ana, a college student dressed in neat slacks and a sweater, looks out at the young faces. She offers some basic information about trafficking, then asks if anyone in the room knows someone who has been trafficked.

"My friend's mom went to Italy," a girl says, prompting a burst of laughter.

"Are there any other possibilities to make a living other than going abroad?" Ana asks.

"Yeah," one boy calls out, "become a prostitute here!" More laughter.

"The problem is that Moldovan girls from rural areas are stupid. And traffickers know it," offers Oxana, 16.

"Families can't afford to buy food and clothing. They would rather risk dying abroad than die here," another says.

The students say they liked Lilya 4-Ever, but can't ever imagine being in Lilya's shoes. "There must be someone who would help you," one says. Before they leave, Ana hands out pamphlets promoting La Strada's trafficking hot line, which receives 250 calls a month, some from girls who have been trafficked to other countries and are desperate for help. Despite heavy promotion of the telephone hot line after screenings of the film--which has been shown in Chisinau and in dozens of village schools since January--the number of calls hasn't increased. The IOM says it is showing the film in an attempt to get people talking about trafficking, to create "a more common discourse," according to Allan Freedman, IOM's deputy chief of mission. A pamphlet handed out at screenings reads: "We want this film to strengthen safeguards and inspire educators, social service workers, local authorities, and all of us on the battle's front lines." After the film a dozen girls gather in the chilly hallway to talk about their dreams for the future. Many have parents working abroad and have to care for younger siblings. Most say they dream of leaving Moldova. "There is no future in this country," says Aliona, 16, who has not seen her mother in a year. According to the IOM, more than 55 percent of trafficked women have children. Irina had never heard of the IOM before she went to Turkey, and she isn't one of the 1,200 women the organization has brought back to Moldova since 2001. She's never seen Lilya 4-Ever. Some at the IOM consider that a good thing, since the film's graphic depiction of life as a sex slave would likely summon up painful memories.

LIFE GOES ON

After lunch Irina pulls on her faux fur-lined coat and steps outside. She's craving a cigarette, but she walks a half-mile down the dirt road before pausing in the sheltered entrance of an abandoned building to light one. "Good village girls don't smoke," she says with a laugh.

Further along the road, Irina stops in front of the house of a man she dated for two years before she was trafficked. She chats easily with his parents, who are working in the front yard, and pets their timid new pony. "I still love him," she says later, watching a few chickens skitter across the road. "But I can't tell him what happened because then the whole village might find out. So I can't be with him."

Irina lowers her voice slightly as she walks. "I had an abortion here when I came home," she says, shoving her hands deep in her pockets. "I couldn't stay overnight because my mother might have found out, but I went back for checkups." During her four months in Turkey, almost none of the hundreds of men who had sex with her used condoms. She says Cara earned \$25,000 by selling her to as many as 10 clients a day, seven days a week, at a rate of \$25 an hour.

In the center of town, Irina stops at a new Italian sportswear factory. "It's like the factory I used to work in," she says. Several of her friends labor in its fluorescent-lit rooms, cutting fabric and stitching paisley-patterned bathing suits decorated with plastic dangling hearts. It's chilly enough inside to need a thick sweater. The smell of body odor competes for attention with the staccato buzz of the machines. A few middle-aged women pump pedals and slide material along the narrow tables, but it is mostly young girls who

hover behind the machines, their long hair pulled back in loose ponytails.

"We prefer the younger girls, 16, 17, because they have no bad habits to unlearn," the factory's accountant says. "They are malleable and will do what we want them to do." In her statement there is the echo of traffickers, who are targeting younger and younger girls. The International Catholic Migration Commission estimates that 30 percent of trafficking victims are minors. The actress who stars in "Lilya 4-Ever" looks no older than 16.

Although the education campaigns, film screenings, and government commissions have yet to make a noticeable dent in the problem, the battle against traffickers is not as one-sided as before. There are new laws--if Irina had been trafficked two years ago, her trafficker would be in Turkey now, a free man--and there are groups that provide legal assistance. If Irina hadn't been able to turn to the anti-trafficking center for help, more girls may have wound up in Medmed Cara's bed.

Three weeks after Cara followed her to Moldova, Irina put her plan into action. In her pigeon Turkish, she offered to help him recruit some local girls. "He told them they would work as prostitutes but they still wanted to go," she says, shaking her head. "They just wanted money, and they trusted him."

On a cold January day, as Cara and his newest acquisitions--two teenagers--drove toward Chisinau, the police were waiting. They stopped the car and arrested Cara. At his trial, Irina testified against him. Then she prayed. And made plans. She decided to move into a shelter for trafficked women in Chisinau and to study massage therapy.

On 2 April, Irina learned that Cara had been sentenced to 10 years in a Moldovan prison. He is now a prisoner in a foreign land, just as Irina was. "If he had been free he would have killed me," she said, recalling the way Cara had looked at her during the trial. When she testified, she said, she stared him in the eye, and felt relief. "He must have felt the same way I did when I was in Turkey."

With additional reporting by TOL correspondent Angela Sirbu. END TEXT.

16. (U) Published Wednesday, June 30, 2004 by Cumhuriyet Newspaper:

TITLE: GUL, POWELL LEND SUPPORT TO ANTI-TRAFFICKING EFFORTS

BEGIN TEXT: Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul and US Secretary of State Colin Powell yesterday attended a signing ceremony between the Istanbul Municipality and the Foundation for Developing Human Resources paving the way for a future shelter for victims of human trafficking at Istanbul's Hilton Hotel. Stating that both the Turkish and US governments supported the shelter project, Gul thanked Powell for attending the ceremony. Gul added that Turkey appreciated NATO's anti-trafficking measures as important international steps. Powell also emphasized that the US placed great importance on the fight against human trafficking and that it was encouraging all countries do all they can to tackle this problem. END TEXT.

17. (U) Published Tuesday, June 29, 2004 by CihanNews:

TITLE: Gul And Powell Attend Opening Ceremony At Shelter For Victims Of Human Trade

BEGIN TEXT: ISTANBUL (CIHAN) - Turkish Foreign Minister, Abdullah Gul and US Secretary of State, Colin Powell attended the opening ceremony between the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and Human Resource Development Association (IKGV) to build a shelter for people who were victims of human trade.

Gul made a statement before the signing ceremony and said he is happy to provide help to these people but the struggle against such crimes is difficult. Gul added that collaboration against these crimes and the development of new strategies is necessary.

Powell also made a statement and he said that, "Turkey has taken a big step in the struggle against human trade. All governments in the world must collaborate on this issue." Also Powell thanked to Turkey for its

leadership on this topic.

Consultancy services for legal, psychological and medical assistance will be offered. END TEXT.

DEUTSCH